



April 12, 2023

Representative

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of Family Research Council (FRC) and the thousands of families we represent, I urge you to vote in favor of the *Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act of 2023* (H.R. 734). FRC will score in favor of H.R. 734 in our annual scorecard.

The passage of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 was a monumental moment for women's rights and equality. Nearly 50 years ago, few opportunities existed for female athletes. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) scholarships and championships were only offered in men's sports, and resources for women's teams were scarce. Title IX was passed in part to correct this injustice and ensure equal access to and equal quality of female athletic programs. Over the past 50 years, the number of female high school athletes skyrocketed from under 300,000 to over 2.6 million. The History Channel also notes that "Title IX is credited with decreasing the dropout rate of girls from high school and increasing the number of women who pursue higher education and complete college degrees."

In a recent op-ed, my colleague, Mary Szoch, recounts her personal story as a female athlete. She always dreamed of being a basketball player, but the WNBA did not exist until 1996. When she was in

sixth grade, she was inspired by the University of Notre Dame women's basketball team's national championship win. Mary ultimately attended Notre Dame, where she spent "three years, thousands of hours of practice, and countless tears" to earn her walk-on spot on the basketball team. She and her team made it to the national championship game once again in 2011, and she recalled receiving "emails from women who were members of the Notre Dame Class of 1977—some of whom were the first female athletes at the university. [...] Several recalled a time when there were 'No female varsity teams.' One wrote about a time when girls' basketball players wore 'the discarded boys' uniforms.' Another said, 'We've come a long way since those first years after Title [IX].'"

Mary recalls, "Reading those emails, I realized the barriers women overcame to make my dream possible. I recognized the debt I owed these women, whose courage gave future generations of girls the opportunity to play sports. [...] Without the women of '77, my dream would have died when I became old enough to realize that biological differences made it impossible for me to play in the NBA. If I'd thought I had no real chance of being the best at basketball, I would have stuck with the piano. Instead, I learned to compete, to be a leader, and never, ever give up."

Like Mary, little girls everywhere should have their hopes and dreams encouraged, not placed out of reach. Unfortunately, today we are seeing an all-out attack on fairness and opportunity for female athletes at both the high school and collegiate levels. One example at the high school level is in track and field. At the 2019 Connecticut Indoor Track & Field State Championships, Selina Soule was robbed of the opportunity to compete for a qualifying spot at the New England Regional Championships in the 55-meter dash because two biological males took the top two spots. This meant that Selina was unable to be seen by college scouts. Similarly, Chelsea Mitchell was robbed of a state championship title four times because these male athletes were allowed to compete in the women's track events. And in one season of collegiate swimming, we have seen the University of Pennsylvania's Lia Thomas, a biological male, win 19 events, three league titles, and one national championship (500-

yard freestyle). In the process, Thomas set multiple records and finished as the top-ranked swimmer for Division I mid-major schools as well as the highest-rated Ivy League and University of Pennsylvania women's swimmer. This both erased the hard-won achievements made by female swimmers over the years and opportunities for current female athletes competing in the pool.

The *Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act of 2023* will help stop the tide of these injustices against women. It will restore Title IX's even playing field for female athletes by making it a violation of federal law for schools that receive federal funds to permit a biological male to participate in an athletic program or activity that is designated for women.

Again, on behalf of FRC, I urge you to vote in favor of Rep. Steube's *Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act of 2023* (H.R. 734). FRC will score in favor of the bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Quena González', with a stylized, cursive script.

Quena González

Senior Director of Government Affairs